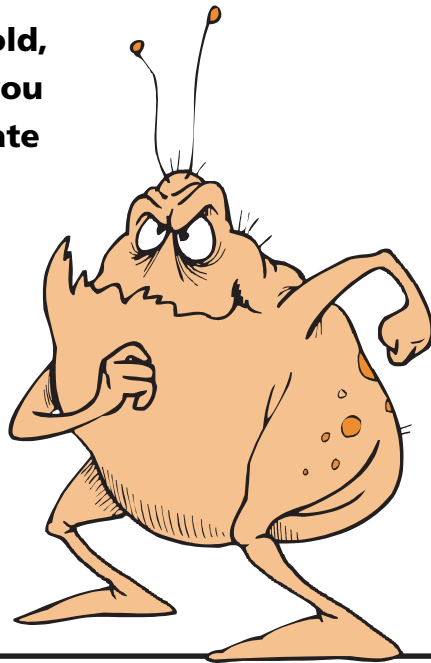


Prevent "Super Bugs"

Each time you take antibiotics, the weaker bacteria die, but those able to fend off the drugs' effects survive, and multiply. The bacteria that are not killed are sometimes called 'super bugs' or antibiotic resistant bacteria.

When you take antibiotics for a cold, cough or the flu, you are helping to create super bugs.

Illness caused by resistant bacteria is harder to treat and requires more powerful and expensive drugs.



What you need to know about . .



. . . colds, the flu and antibiotics!



For more information visit:

www.vdh.virginia.gov/epi/getsmart/index.asp

Facts About Colds & The Flu



A virus causes colds and the flu.

They spread very easily from one person to another by coughing and sneezing.

Antibiotics don't help colds, the flu, sore throats, most bronchitis and earaches.

Taking an antibiotic won't make your cold go away, help you feel better or stop the spread of illness.

- Colds can take 2 weeks or longer to get better.
- The average person gets 2-3 colds each year.
- There is no cure for colds or the flu.

What About Antibiotics?

Antibiotics are used to treat illness caused by bacteria, such as strep throat. Your doctor will decide if a bacteria or a virus causes your illness. Antibiotics are of no use when you have a cold or the flu. **Only take an antibiotic if your doctor prescribes one, always finish the medicine and never save or share your antibiotics.**



When You Have a Viral Illness:

- Drink plenty of fluids, water and juices.
- Get extra rest.
- Use saline nose drops for a stuffy nose.
- Take acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil) as needed for pain or fever.
- Avoid cigarette smoke.



Tips to Prevent Colds and the Flu

- Wash your hands often.
- Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze.
- Get a flu shot each year.
- Eat a healthy diet and get regular exercise.
- Don't share cups, glasses or eating utensils.